



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Focus on Life Suicide Prevention Program Continues Strong in 2013

Hagåtña, Guam –Residents of Guam and other callers from neighboring Pacific Islands use the Guam 671-647-8833 crisis hotline and the national lifeline 1-800-273-TALK. The Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (DMHSA) received the **Area Code Call Volume Report** for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This report shows that Pacific Island communities access available phone resources to get help during a moment of crisis such as having suicide thoughts. DMHSA promotes local suicide prevention initiatives that teach individuals how to recognize and respond to individuals who may have thoughts of suicide and to make appropriate referrals for professional help.

SAMHSA's national lifeline reports eight hundred five (805) callers from 2005 through 2012. The majority of these calls were received in 2010 when Guam's *Focus on Life* suicide prevention and early intervention program developed and launched a comprehensive media campaign, along with the conduct of two evidenced-based programs. Guam started with a workforce development approach of training trainers; they in turn helped to strengthen the island's capacity by training to date, 1,077 individuals in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and 609 suicide alert helpers in safeTALK.

Focus on Life in 2013

DMHSA's Prevention and Training Branch will continue to strengthen its suicide prevention efforts and outreach for Guam and the Pacific Islands region. A second 3-year Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Grant was awarded by SAMHSA for close to \$5 million for FY 2013 through FY 2015. A refreshed media campaign was developed with new "faces and stories" – encouraging the community members to share their story, know more and be involved in stopping suicide on the island. These interviews complete a multimedia campaign to be aired in local media channels throughout 2013, and is available for viewing through Facebook (search and like "Focus on Life Guam").

Monthly Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) events are planned for this year that is open to anyone over the age of 16. Registrations are currently being accepted for the 4-hour safeTALK training on February 11th, which is available to individuals who would like to learn about the suicide warning signs and resources available on Guam and nationally.

For more information on how to register and be involved in suicide prevention activities and trainings, contact the DMHSA PEACE office at 477-9079 through 9083, visit www.peaceguam.org, or like "Focus on Life Guam" on Facebook.

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Attachment:

** **Area Code Call Volume Report** by SAMHSA*